

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of handling a call from a caller to a communication device, the method comprising:
 - 5 receiving the call;
 - determining if the communication device is in a privacy mode; and
 - if the communication device is in the privacy mode, completing the call if a privacy mode code is entered by the caller.
- 10 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, routing the call to a message system if no privacy mode code is entered by the caller.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the privacy mode code is selected by a user of the communication device.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the communication device is one of: a cellular telephone and a personal digital assistant.
- 20 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the method is performed by one of: a base station and a switch.
6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of receiving a request from the communication device to place the communication device in the privacy mode.
- 25 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the request further comprises:
 - a privacy mode message selected by a user of the communication device and adapted to be provided to the caller prior to completing the call; and
 - the privacy mode code selected by the user of the communication device.
- 30 8. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of receiving a request from the communication device to place the communication device out of the privacy mode.

9. A method of handling a call from a caller to a communication device, the method comprising:
 - receiving the call;
 - determining if the communication device is in a privacy mode; and
 - if the communication device is in the privacy mode, providing a privacy mode message including a selected privacy override code to the caller.
10. The method of claim 9, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, completing the call if the selected privacy override code is entered by the caller.
11. The method of claim 9, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, routing the call to a message system if no selected privacy override code is entered by the caller.
12. The method of claim 9, wherein the privacy mode message is selected from a group of prerecorded messages.
13. The method of claim 9, wherein the privacy mode message is recorded by a user of the communication device.
14. The method of claim 9, wherein the privacy override code is selected by a user of the communication device.
15. The method of claim 9, wherein the communication device is a cellular telephone or a personal digital assistant.
16. The method of claim 9, wherein the method is performed by a base station or a switch.
17. The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of receiving a request from the communication device to place the communication device in the privacy mode.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein the request further comprises:

the privacy mode message selected by a user of the communication device and adapted to be provided to the caller upon receiving the call; and

the privacy override code selected by the user of the communication device.

5 19. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of receiving a request from the communication device to place the communication device out of the privacy mode.

20. A computer readable medium having instructions for causing a computer to perform a method of handling a call from a caller to a communication device, the method comprising:

10 receiving the call;

determining if the communication device is in a privacy mode; and

if the communication device is in the privacy mode, completing the call if a predetermined code is entered by the caller.

15 21. The computer readable medium of claim 20, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, routing the call to a message system if no predetermined code is entered by the caller.

20 22. A computer readable medium having instructions for causing a computer to perform a method of handling a call from a caller to a communication device, the method comprising:

receiving the call;

determining if the communication device is in a privacy mode; and

if the communication device is in the privacy mode, providing a privacy mode message including a selected privacy override code to the caller.

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23. The computer readable medium of claim 22, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, completing the call if the privacy override code is entered by the caller.

30 24. The computer readable medium of claim 22, further comprising if the communication device is in the privacy mode, routing the call to a message system if no privacy override code is entered by the caller.

25. A system for handling a call from a caller to a user of a communication device, the system comprising:

a data entry device capable of receiving input to cause the communication device to enter

5 a privacy mode;

a memory capable of storing a privacy mode message, the privacy mode message adapted to be provided to the caller prior to completing the call to the user; and

a receiver capable of completing the call to the user if a privacy mode code is entered by the caller.

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26. The system of claim 25, further wherein the receiver is capable of routing the call to a message system if no privacy mode code is entered by the caller.

27. The system of claim 25, wherein the data entry device is a telephone keypad.

15 28. The system of claim 25, wherein the privacy mode code comprises at least one keystroke from the data entry device.

20 29. The system of claim 25, wherein the privacy mode code is selected by the user of the communication device.

30. The system of claim 25, wherein the communication device is one of: a cellular telephone and a personal digital assistant.

25 31. A system for handling a call from a caller to a user of a communication device, the system comprising:

a data entry device capable of receiving input to cause the communication device to enter a privacy mode; and

a memory capable of providing a privacy mode message including a selected privacy

30 override code to the caller prior to completing the call to the user.

32. The system of claim 31, further comprising a receiver capable of completing the call to the user if the selected privacy override code is entered by the caller.

33. The system of claim 32, further wherein the receiver is capable of routing the call to a message system if no selected privacy override code is entered by the caller.
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34. The system of claim 31, wherein the selected privacy override code is provided by the user of the communication device.

10 35. A system for handling a call from a caller to a user of a communication device, the system comprising:

a data entry device capable of receiving input to cause the communication device to enter a privacy mode; and

15 a receiver capable of receiving the call to the communication device and completing the call to the user only if an interrupt is received from the caller.

36. The system of claim 35, wherein the interrupt is a privacy mode code entered by the caller.

20 37. A system for handling a call from a caller to a user of a communication device, the system comprising:

a receiver capable of receiving the call and a privacy mode code entered by the caller;

a memory capable of storing a status indicating if the communication device is in a privacy mode; and

25 a transmitter capable of completing the call to the user if the communication device is in the privacy mode and the privacy mode code is entered by the caller.

38. The system of claim 37, wherein the memory is further capable of storing a message from the caller if the communication device is in the privacy mode and no privacy mode code is
30 entered by the caller.

39. The system of claim 37, wherein the memory is further capable of storing a privacy mode message adapted to be provided to the caller prior to completing the call to the user.

40. The system of claim 37, wherein the receiver is further capable of receiving a request
5 from the communication device to place the communication device in the privacy mode

41. The system of claim 40, wherein the request further comprises:

a privacy mode message selected by a user of the communication device and adapted to
be provided to the caller prior to completing the call to the user; and

10 the privacy mode code selected by the user of the communication device.

42. The method of claim 40, wherein the receiver is further capable of receiving a request
from the communication device to place the communication device out of the privacy mode.

15 43. The system of claim 37, wherein the communication device is one of: a cellular telephone
and a personal digital assistant.